

7th September 2008

Senator McEwen, Chair
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

Dear Senator McEwen,

Please accept this submission to the inquiry into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008.

I am President of the local Sport fishing Club affiliated with the Australian National Sportfishing Association. We currently have a membership of 56 and are a family oriented club that holds monthly competitions where some of our anglers practice catch and release, so with that I would say we already conserve our fishing areas. Personally I have fished the areas of the southern Great Barrier Reef for 30 years. In this time I have witnessed change to the fishing pressure caused by recreational anglers and consider that the fish stocks are better now than when I first started fishing. Some of the factors that have reduced the fishing pressure in my area are the spawning closures, bag limits, green zones and the growing cost of running a boat large enough to travel safely to the areas left open for fishing (I don't even want to start on the price of fuel).

Since the introduction of the green zones imposed on us the burden has fallen on the fisherpersons to know where they are as there are no markings as to where the green zones are on the water and we rely on electronics that were not needed before. One of my favourite fishing locations was lost to a green zone and it contained a man made structure the Break Sea Lightship where we fished for pelagic fish by trolling around this structure catching migratory fish that take no notice of green zones.

Please do not make changes to this bill that makes it harder for me to enjoy the company of my friends and their children to have a day out fishing. If it were just for a feed of fish it would be cheaper to buy fish at the shop than to own and run a boat, buy bait and tackle and spent the time and effort

Gregory Keith Vary